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NEWS RELEASE

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Court of Appeal Holds Special Session for Imperial Valley High School Students

San Diego—More than 1,000 high school students from the Imperial Valley will hear oral arguments before the Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division One, at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, April 7, 2006, Administrative Presiding Justice Judith D. McConnell announced today.

The public is invited to attend the special session at Southwest High School, 2001 Ocotillo Drive, El Centro. Part of the court's community outreach program, the session will give students the opportunity to ask questions about the appellate process.

Participating justices include Administrative Presiding Justice McConnell and Associate Justices Gilbert Nares, Judith Haller, Cynthia Aaron, and Joan Irion.

Division One of the Fourth Appellate District usually holds oral argument in its San Diego courtroom. For more information, call Stephen M. Kelly, Clerk/Administrator of the Court of Appeal, at 619-645-2760. The cases to be argued follow.

People v. Hamo, D046130. In this arson case, the defendant challenges his conviction for presenting a false or fraudulent claim for payment of insurance benefits, asserting the jury's finding is not supported by substantial evidence.

People v. Brown, D045453. In this case, the defendant who represented himself at trial challenges his convictions for sale of cocaine base and possession of cocaine base for sale. He asserts that he is entitled to a new trial because (1) the trial judge erroneously denied both his pretrial request for a complete transcript of the first trial and his request to postpone his questioning of a prosecution witness after the judge ordered

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the preparation of a supplemental transcript; and (2) the trial judge violated his constitutional rights by prematurely terminating his defense as a means to punish him for disruptive courtroom behavior.

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